

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Twin Falls District  
Shoshone Field Office  
400 West F Street  
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

**Scoping Information Package  
Return to Snake River Special Recreation Permit  
DOI-BLM-ID-T0300-2014-0032-CX**

This information package summarizes a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposal to issue a special recreation permit (SRP) to Return to Snake River in accordance with the Monument Management Framework Plan. Federal actions must be analyzed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations to determine potential environmental consequences.

The purpose of this report is to inform interested and affected parties of the proposal and to solicit comments to assist with the NEPA review of the proposal. Analysis of the proposal is ongoing, and will be documented in a categorical exclusion (CX) with an estimated completion date of 8/29/2014. Comments received in response to this solicitation will be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action and to identify stipulations and/or mitigation actions to the proposed action that meet the purpose of and need for the project.

**Purpose and Need for Action**

The BLM's purpose and need is to respond to Return to Snake River's application for a SRP. Special recreation permits are authorizations which allow for recreational uses of the public lands and related waters. They are issued as a means to control visitor use, protect natural and cultural resources, and provide for the health and safety of visitors. Commercial SRPs are also issued as a mechanism to provide a fair return to the United States for the commercial recreational use of public lands.

**Existing Condition**

The area being requested in Return to Snake River's SRP application is within Jerome and Twin Falls Counties. Vegetation consists of sage brush, rabbit brush, cheat grass and several varieties of weeds. The Snake River Canyon rim is BLM on the north and south sides, see attached map. There are multiple rights-of-ways issued within the immediate area for a state highway, fiber optic line and private property access. BLM land southeast of the Hansen Bridge is a wildlife tract consisting of local habitat for sagebrush obligate species. The area northwest of the bridge is used informally as a picnic area and site-seeing/viewing area.

**Proposed Action**

Provide access to private lands for Return to Snake River event and restrict access to BLM land in the immediate area, see maps. An existing roadway, identified in the application, will be used

for ingress/egress from private land immediately adjacent to the BLM land on the northeast side of the Snake River Canyon by the Hansen Bridge. All other activities, including vending, the rocket launch, broadcaster set up, etc., will take place on the private land.

Just north of the existing roadway, Applicant will construct a new, temporary roadway for emergency access. Roadway will be graded, possibly with gravel, and will be restored and reseeded after the event.

The remaining identified BLM land will not be used for the Event. Rather, the permit will allow the Applicant to prohibit the general public from entering the BLM land during the Event for safety and crowd control purposes.

The event is proposed to take place on September 7, 2014. However, there is the potential it could be changed to a later date. The public would be restricted from BLM land 6 pm the day before the event date – 2 hours after the event.

### **Preliminary Issues**

There are no preliminary issues identified by the Burley and Shoshone Field Offices.

### **Decision to be Made**

The BLM Shoshone Field Manager will decide whether to deny the SRP application, issue the SRP, or issue the SRP with modifications.

### **Public Input Needed**

Comments are specifically requested on the proposed action, preliminary issues, and alternatives. Comments made on this proposal would be most helpful if they are received by August 4, 2014 and are directly relevant to the proposal and project area. The BLM will not reject public feedback outside established public involvement timeframes; however, these comments may be considered secondary to comments received in a timely manner and may only be assessed to determine if they identify concerns that would substantially alter the assumptions, proposal, design, or analysis presented in the CX. Written comments must be submitted to:

Elizabeth Maclean  
Shoshone Field Manager  
400 West F Street  
Shoshone, ID 83352.

The office business hours for submitting hand-delivered comments are 7:45 AM – 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc), or portable document format (.pdf) to [blm\\_id\\_shoshoneoffice@blm.gov](mailto:blm_id_shoshoneoffice@blm.gov). E-mails submitted to e-mail addresses other than the one listed, in other formats than those listed, or containing viruses will be rejected. To be most helpful, comments sent electronically should include the title of this project in the subject line. Please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization. Issues that are outside the scope of the proposal will not be addressed at this planning level.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The primary contact for questions and comments for this analysis is John Kurtz, Outdoor Recreation Planner, (208) 732-7296.